

Message Text

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UNCLAS STATE 312893

F ;M ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEWIS ,

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: APER, AFSP

SUBJECT: TOUR OF DUTY POLICY FOR IO POSTS ABROAD

REF: GENEVA 9838

NESCO; MONTREAL ICAON, NAIROBI FOR NOZIGLIA ROME FODAG,
VI NA UNIDO

1. WE HAVE TAKEN ANOTHER LOOK AT THE TOD POLICY IN THE
LIGHT OF YOUR REFERENCED MESSAGE. WE WILL, OF COURSE ALSO
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CAREFULLY CONSIDER AS WELL THE VIEWS THAT MAY BE EXPRESSED
BY ANY OF THE OTHER POSTS WITH WHICH YOU SHARED YOUR
OPINIONS. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE POLICY PER SE IS NOT NEW
AND WE REGRET THAT THIS FEATURE WAS NOT MORE CLEARLY
STATED. WHAT IS NOW ENTERING INTO THE EQUATION IS A MORE
CONCERTED ADHERENCE TO IT FOR OFFICERS PROFESSIONALLY

ENGAGED IN MULTILATERAL ISSUES.

2. AS YOU SO APTLY STATED, MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY IS GROWING IN IMPORTANCE. THERE HAS LIKEWISE BEEN NOTED IN PER A QUICKENING OF INTEREST AMONG OFFICERS THROUGHOUT THE SERVICE IN ASSIGNMENTS IN THIS FIELD AND WE WISH TO BUILD ON IT. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE HAVE JOBS FOR INTERESTED PERSONNEL TO GO TO AND THAT WE, THEREFORE, BROADEN AS

QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE THE BASE OF OFFICERS WHO HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO MULTILATERALISM. THE NECESSARY SKILLS FOR SUCCESS IN THIS FUNCTION CAN ONLY BE ACQUIRED AND SHARPENED ON THE JOB. THESE JOBS PRIMARILY EXIST AT IO POSTS, OTHER MULTILATERAL MISSIONS (E.G. NATO, OECD) AND IN WASHINGTON. THE NUMBERS OF POSITIONS ARE NOW SLOWLY EXPANDING, BUT ONLY TO A VERY SMALL EXTENT; IT IS BEING RECOGNIZED THAT MULTILATERAL SKILLS ARE ALSO INCREASINGLY NEEDED AT VARIOUS EMBASSIES, AS IT BECOMES NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT CLOSER LIAISON IN A BILATERAL CONTEXT ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES. THIS HAS RESULTED IN CERTAIN POSITIONS BEING IDENTIFIED WHICH CALL FOR THE ASSIGNMENT OF OFFICERS WITH SOME MULTILATERAL EXPERIENCE.

3. IN PRINCIPLE, WE AGREE THAT MULTILATERAL SKILLS ARE NOT EASILY ACQUIRED AND THAT CONTINUITY IS AN ASPECT NOT TO BE TREATED LIGHTLY. BUT FOR THE NEXT 5 TO 6 YEARS THE BASE MUST BE BROADENED WITH DISPATCH. BECAUSE OFFICERS WITH THE REQUISITE SKILLS ARE IN SHORT SUPPLY, THE DECISION WAS MADE TO ADHERE MORE STRICTLY TO THE THREE YEAR LENGTH OF TOURS, AT LEAST UNTIL MORE OFFICERS HAVE

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ACQUIRED SOME EXPOSURE TO THIS FIELD. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN WORKING WITH PER AND FSI TO ACCORD MULTILATERALISM MORE EMPHASIS IN TRAINING COURSES; ROTATIONAL JUNIOR OFFICERS HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE BUREAU AND TO USUN (AND A REQUEST IS PENDING FOR ONE FOR GENEVA); A TRAINING SLOT IN THIS FIELD HAS BEEN RESERVED TO SEND AN OFFICER TO COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY FOR AN ACADEMIC YEAR; CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO EXPANDING, ON A SELECTED BASIS, DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES TO AFFORD OPPORTUNITIES TO OFFICERS ASSIGNED TO THE REGIONAL BUREAUS TO ACQUIRE SOME EXPOSURE TO MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY; ETC. ALL OF THESE EFFORTS, WHILE HELPFUL, ARE PATENTLY INSUFFICIENT TO BROADEN THE BASE OF OFFICERS FROM WHICH ASSIGNMENTS CAN BE MADE TO POSITIONS CALLING FOR MULTILATERAL SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE.

4. AS FOR THE MATTER OF HOW A NEW OFFICER CAN BECOME RAPIDLY EFFECTIVE AFTER ARRIVAL, THE POST CAN BE OF

ASSISTANCE IN REDUCING THE TIME FRAME TO A MINIMUM BY
HAVING ON HAND POST RECORDS CONCERNING WORKING CONTACTS,
BIOGRAPHIC FILES, ME;CONS, PROCEDURES, PRECEDENTS,
STATUTES, OVERALL POLICIES OF VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND
THE LIKE. AT GENEVA, THERE ALSO EXISTS THE VERY COMMEND-
ABLE TOOLS WHICH YOU HAVE DEVELOPED, NAMELY THE GENEVA

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MISSION POLICY STATEMENT AND THE GENEVA INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS BRIEFING BOOK. ALL OF THESE SHOULD
MATERIALLY REDUCE THE BREAK-IN PERIOD NEEDED FOR NEW
OFFICERS.

5. PER AND THE BUREAU ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER CAREFULLY
ANY WELL-DOCUMENTED INDIVIDUAL CASES YOU WISH TO BRING
TO OUR ATTENTION, VIA PER CHANNEL MESSAGE, FOR AN
EXCEPTION TO THE TOUR OF DUTY POLICY. HOWEVER, IT WILL
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BE ESSENTIAL TO KEEP EXCEPTIONS TO A BARE MINIMUM IN ORDER
TO ACHIEVE THE LONGER RANGE GOALS FOR THE PERSONNEL
SYSTEM OUTLINED ABOVE.
ROBINSON

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